

We claim:

1. A programmable processor comprising:

an instruction path;

a data path;

5 an external interface operable to receive data from an external source and communicate the received data over the data path;

a cache operable to retain data communicated between the external interface and the data path;

10 a register file operable to receive and store data from the data path and communicate the stored data to the data path; and

an execution unit coupled to the instruction path and the data path and operable to decode and execute instructions received from the instruction path, wherein in response to decoding a single instruction specifying a data selection operand and a first and a second register each having a register width, the first and second registers providing a plurality of data elements each having an elemental width smaller than the register width of the first and second registers, the data selection operand comprising a plurality of fields each selecting one of the plurality of data elements, the execution unit is operable to provide the data element selected by each field of the data selection operand to a predetermined position in a catenated result.

20 2. The processor of claim 1 wherein each field of the data selection operand provides a sufficient number of bits to specify any one of the plurality of data elements.

3. The processor of claim 2 wherein each field of the data selection operand has a width of  $n$  bits wherein the plurality of data elements comprises  $2^n$  data elements.

4. The processor of claim 1 wherein the data selection operand is provided by a register specified by the single instruction .
- 5 5. The processor of claim 4 wherein the data selection operand has a width equal to the specified register width.
6. The processor of claim 1 wherein the catenated result is provided to a register.
- 10 7. The processor of claim 1 wherein the plurality of data elements has a combined width equal to the width of the first register plus the width of the second register.
8. The processor of claim 1 wherein the instruction further specifies a data element width of the plurality of data elements.
- 15 9. The processor of claim 1 wherein each data element has a width of 8 bits.
10. The processor of claim 1 wherein the catenated result has a width of 128 bits.
- 20 11. The processor of claim 1 wherein for each field of the data selection operand, a relative location of the field within the data selection operand corresponds to a relative location of the predetermined position within the catenated result.

12. The processor of claim 1 wherein the execution unit is further operable to, in response to decoding a second single instruction specifying a third and a fourth register each containing a plurality of operands, multiply the plurality of floating point operands in the third register by the plurality of operands in the fourth register to produce a plurality of products and provide the plurality of products to partitioned fields of a result register as a second catenated result.

13. A programmable processor comprising:

an instruction path;

a data path;

an external interface operable to receive data from an external source and communicate the received data over the data path;

a cache operable to retain data communicated between the external interface and the data path;

a register file operable to receive and store data from the data path and communicate the stored data to the data path; and

an execution unit coupled to the instruction path and the data path and operable to decode and execute instructions received from the instruction path, wherein in response to decoding a single instruction specifying a data selection operand and a register having a register width, the register providing a plurality of data elements each having an elemental width smaller than the register width of the register, the data selection operand comprising a plurality of fields each selecting one of the plurality of data elements, the execution unit is operable to provide the data element selected by each field of the data selection operand to a predetermined position in a catenated result.

14. A data processing system comprising:

(a) a bus coupling components in the data processing system;

(b) an external memory coupled to the bus;

5 (c) a programmable microprocessor coupled to the bus and capable of operation

independent of another host processor, the microprocessor comprising:

an instruction path;

a data path;

an external interface operable to receive data from an external source and communicate

10 the received data over the data path;

a cache operable to retain data communicated between the external interface and the data path;

a register file operable to receive and store data from the data path and communicate the stored data to the data path; and

15 an execution unit coupled to the instruction path and the data path and operable to decode and execute instructions received from the instruction path, wherein in response to decoding a single instruction specifying a data selection operand and a first and a second register each having a register width, the first and second registers providing a plurality of data elements each having an elemental width smaller than the register width of the first and second registers, the  
20 data selection operand comprising a plurality of fields each selecting one of the plurality of data elements, the execution unit is operable to provide the data element selected by each field of the data selection operand to a predetermined position in a catenated result.

15. The system of claim 14 wherein each field of the data selection operand provides a sufficient number of bits to specify any one of the plurality of data elements.

16. The system of claim 15 wherein each field of the data selection operand has a width of n  
5 bits wherein the plurality of data elements comprises  $2^n$  data elements.

17. The system of claim 14 wherein the data selection operand is provided by a register specified by the single instruction .

10 18. The system of claim 17 wherein the data selection operand has a width equal to the specified register width.

19. The system of claim 14 wherein the catenated result is provided to a register.

15 20. The system of claim 14 wherein the plurality of data elements has a combined width equal to the width of the first register plus the width of the second register.

21. The system of claim 14 wherein the instruction further specifies a data element width of the plurality of data elements.

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22. The system of claim 14 wherein each data element has a width of 8 bits.

23. The system of claim 14 wherein the catenated result has a width of 128 bits.

24. The system of claim 14 wherein for each field of the data selection operand, a relative location of the field within the data selection operand corresponds to a relative location of the predetermined position within the catenated result.

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25. The system of claim 14 wherein the execution unit is further operable to, in response to decoding a second single instruction specifying a third and a fourth register each containing a plurality of operands, multiply the plurality of floating point operands in the third register by the plurality of operands in the fourth register to produce a plurality of products and provide the  
10 plurality of products to partitioned fields of a result register as a second catenated result.

26. A data processing system comprising:

(a) a bus coupling components in the data processing system;

(b) an external memory coupled to the bus;

15 (c) a programmable microprocessor coupled to the bus and capable of operation

independent of another host processor, the microprocessor comprising:

an instruction path;

a data path;

an external interface operable to receive data from an external source and communicate

20 the received data over the data path;

a cache operable to retain data communicated between the external interface and the data path;

a register file operable to receive and store data from the data path and communicate the

stored data to the data path; and

an execution unit coupled to the instruction path and the data path and operable to decode and execute instructions received from the instruction path, wherein in response to decoding a single instruction specifying a data selection operand and a register having a register width, the register providing a plurality of data elements each having an elemental width smaller than the register width of the register, the data selection operand comprising a plurality of fields each selecting one of the plurality of data elements, the execution unit is operable to provide the data element selected by each field of the data selection operand to a predetermined position in a catenated result.

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